



Citation for published version:

Carr, S & Costas Battle, I 2015, 'Attachment theory, neoliberalism, and social conscience', *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology*, vol. 35, no. 3, pp. 160-176. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0038681>

DOI:

[10.1037/a0038681](https://doi.org/10.1037/a0038681)

Publication date:

2015

Document Version

Peer reviewed version

[Link to publication](#)

University of Bath

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Attachment Theory, Neoliberalism, and Social Conscience

Abstract

There have been calls for psychologists to develop greater awareness in relation to the cultural, ethical, and political utility of theoretical and empirical development. At present, it is particularly important to deliberate critically the meaning of academic knowledge in psychology in the context of the debate surrounding neoliberalism. Specifically, what do our questions, findings, and knowledge *mean* when we interrogate them from particular social, ethical, and moral perspectives surrounding neoliberalism? To this end, this paper examines recent frontiers of knowledge production in attachment theory that suggest features of attachment insecurity might be seen as strengths when considered in relation to particular outcomes. Issues discussed include: (a) what is considered a strength in a neoliberal society, (b) neoliberal governmentality and the role of psychological research, and (c) the emergence of a critical voice in relation to attachment research.

Introduction

It has been suggested (e.g., Gergen, 1994, 2001) that psychologists have been guilty of a “generalized avoidance” of some of the most significant moral and political debates of recent decades. It is important that we acknowledge that the theory, predictions, findings, and methods of inquiry arising from what is claimed to be value-neutral science serve to guide societal practices with the capacity “to alter cultural life for good or ill” (Gergen, 2001, p. 809). Gergen has argued that to continue to avoid major contemporary social, political, and ethical debates is myopic (at best) and ethically questionable (at worst). If particular programs of knowledge and rationality favor certain ways of life or value systems then it is essential to reflect on this. He warned of the dangers of “irrelevance” and “degeneration” that await a discipline that ultimately “closes its doors on the storms that rage around it” (2001, p. 811).

In the spirit of Gergen's call, this paper originates with our contention that there is a pressing need to reflect on, situate, and critique attachment theory's (Bowlby, 1973, 1980) propositions in relation to a set of political, economic, and cultural practices and ideals that have been labeled “neoliberalism.” Neoliberalism has been sculpting the social, political, and economic landscape of everyday life in the Western world (and beyond) since the 1970's. Authors (e.g., Chomsky, 1999; Dumenil & Levy, 2011; Giroux, 2005; Harvey, 2005) have suggested that under the reign of neoliberalism there has been increasing emphasis on values such as the single-minded pursuit of policy and ideology prioritizing the commercialization of everyday life, the corporatization of human services, the dismantling of the welfare state, the militarization of public space, ruthless individualism, and the increasing privatization of the public sphere.

At the extreme end of the critique, some authors (e.g., Winegard & Winegard, 2011) have suggested that neoliberal policies might be considered a health risk in and of themselves, and call on psychologists to contribute to the debate on the grounds that “it is only through the effects of these policies on flesh and blood humans that we are critical of them” (Conclusion: Neoliberalism is a

Health Risk section, para 2). Exploration of the costs of a neoliberal society in relation to psychological functioning is clearly complex (and potentially problematic), not least because it is difficult to establish causal links. Nonetheless, some researchers have hinted at correlations between what might be considered “consequences” or “features” of neoliberal society (such as wealth inequality and an increased focus on individualism) and indicators of wellbeing, including a negative influence on general mental health, anxiety and impulse-control disorders, drug abuse, child well-being, neuroticism, narcissism, empathy, levels of trust, and social capital (e.g., Konrath, O’Brien, & Hsing, 2011; Pickett, James, & Wilkinson, 2006; Putnam, 2000; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010; Twenge, 2000; Twenge & Foster, 2010; Twenge et al., 2010; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009).

As the idea gains momentum that organising society exclusively in accordance with market fundamentalism poses a significant social and psychological threat (e.g., see Eichner, 2010; Somers, 2008; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010) this paper contends that it is important for psychology to enter the debate surrounding neoliberalism. To this end, we believe that frameworks such as attachment theory (Bowlby, 1973, 1980) may hold particular significance. Researchers (e.g., Mercer, 2011; Waters, 2000) have hailed Bowlby’s theory as one of the last surviving “grand theories” not to have been completely dismissed, revised, or extensively reworked. This is largely due to the theory’s broadly integrative nature in relation to factors such as (a) its links with evolutionary principles, (b) its usefulness in shedding light on a range of dimensions of human existence, (c) its relevance through the lifespan, (d) its appeal to individual difference and normative ways of thinking, (e) its incorporation of the notions of both stability and change, and (f) its guidance on what makes a good human relationship, together with a recognition of the significance of relationships in shaping human experiences (Waters, 2000). Furthermore, Bowlby’s attempts to provide such an integrative framework for our understanding of cognition, emotion, behaviour, and relationships suggest that he saw each of these aspects of human experience as best understood in the context of the others (Carr, 2012).

Despite the above, attachment theorists have remained silent in relation to the neoliberal debate and we believe that it is important to break this silence. Bringing attachment theory into the discourse and debate concerning neoliberalism can, in particular, help to shape more pragmatically the theory and the questions asked by attachment researchers at the frontier of knowledge generation in this important area. In keeping with Gergen's (2001) arguments, if attachment theory is to continue to evolve and its central tenets are to contribute positively to social, cultural, and political life then it will be critical to connect the theory to the current socio-political context of neoliberalism. We acknowledge that the interface between attachment theory and neoliberalism opens up a plethora of significant ideas and interesting debates. Although we pay attention to some of these ideas in the course of our paper, our specific goal is (through detailed examination of a case example) to highlight how contemporary avenues of attachment research might unwittingly serve neoliberal values and might even be considered a "technology" of neoliberal governance. We begin our paper with a brief outline of neoliberalism (paying particular attention to the notion of neoliberal governmentality, Foucault, 2008), and a short overview of attachment theory, before proceeding to interrogate recent examples of research directions at the frontier of attachment theory.

Neoliberalism and Governmentality

The concept of neoliberalism has, during the past twenty years or so, been popular in political and academic debate and it is common for authors to suggest that we currently live in the "neoliberal society" or the "age of neoliberalism" (Thorsen & Lie, 2006). However, the significance afforded to the phenomenon of neoliberalism does not imply that it is a clearly defined concept: it is not easy to define (Thorsen, 2010). Given the myriad of authors who have failed to outline their interpretation of "neoliberalism" and the almost exclusive appropriation of the term by critics (self-proclaimed neoliberals are a rare breed), the outcome has been the frequent reduction of "neoliberalism" to a

synonym for “any negative effect caused by the free market” (Boas & Gans-Morse, 2009; Thorsen, 2010).

Attempts to clarify the term (e.g., Barnett, 2010; Harvey, 2005; Thorsen, 2010) have centred particularly on the idea that neoliberalism reflects a family of ideas and political beliefs associated with the revival of economic liberalism (taken to include the ideas of thinkers such as Friedrich von Hayek and Joseph Schumpeter of the school of Austrian economics and Milton Friedman of the “Chicago School” of economics) in the mid-twentieth century. Authors (e.g., Read, 2009) have distinguished neoliberalism from what has been termed “classical liberalism” (e.g., Locke, 1689; Smith, 1776) in relation to the ways in which they tend to *focus* on economic activity. For example classical liberalism focused on exchange in relation to what Adam Smith and John Locke referred to as mankind’s tendency (and right) to barter and exchange in relation to private property. Specifically, it naturalized the market “...as a system with its own rationality, its own interest, and its own specific efficiency, arguing ultimately for its superior efficiency as a distributor of goods and services” (Read, 2009, p. 27). Accordingly, under classical liberalism the market became a space within which individuals were autonomous to exchange and this space had to be safeguarded by the state through the unconditional right to private property and market-based liberty. As Read (2009) has noted, classical liberalism therefore makes *exchange* the general organising force in society. Neoliberalism, according to Foucault (2008), has simply extended the process of placing economic activity as an organising social and political force, taking as its focus not only the right to *exchange* but also the necessity for *competition*. For Read (2009), what is important:

“...is the way in which this shift in “anthropology” from “*homo-economicus*” as an exchanging creature to a competitive creature, or rather as a creature whose tendency to compete must be fostered, entails a general shift in the way in which human beings make themselves and are made subjects” (p. 28).

Like classical liberalism, authors agree that neoliberalism's central conviction has been that the only legitimate purpose of the state is to safeguard individual (especially commercial) liberty and strong private property rights (Nozick 1974; Hayek 1979). There has also been a belief that the state ought to possess minimal (or at least drastically reduced) power, strength, and size, and that any transgression by the state beyond this sole, legitimate purpose (i.e., protecting individual liberty and market freedom) is unacceptable (Thorsen, 2010). Harvey's (2005) definition summarises:

Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices. The state has to guarantee, for example, the quality and integrity of money. It must also set up those military, defence, police and legal structures and functions required to secure private property rights and to guarantee, by force if need be, the proper functioning of markets. Furthermore, if markets do not exist (in areas such as land, water, education, health care, social security, or environmental pollution) then they must be created, by state action if necessary. But beyond these tasks the state should not venture. State interventions in markets (once created) must be kept to a bare minimum because, according to the theory, the state cannot possibly possess enough information to second-guess market signals (prices) and because powerful interest groups will inevitably distort and bias state interventions (particularly in democracies) for their own benefit. (p. 2)

This definition predominantly positions neoliberalism as an economic-political *paradigm*. However, Larner (2000, 2006) has outlined that it has also been thought of as a *hegemonic ideology* and a distinctive form of *governmentality*. For example, as Thorsen and Lie (2006) have asserted, "free markets and free trade will, it is believed, set free the creative potential and the entrepreneurial

spirit which is built into the spontaneous order of any human society, and thereby lead to more individual liberty and well-being, and a more efficient allocation of resources” (p. 14). Neoliberal ideology then, in line with the aforementioned free market values, staunchly upholds individual freedom and responsibility (Larner, 2000). Akin to how the State should refrain from imposing any constraints on the market, government should not hamper citizens' freedom by inflicting on them the burdens of the welfare state (spending on social support and equality of opportunity - see Briggs, 1961, for a review). Margaret Thatcher (1987) popularly encapsulated this notion when she claimed that "there is no such thing as society, there are individual men and women and there are families" (p. 10). Responsibility, according to neoliberal discourse, is conceptualised in terms of subscribing to the free market's values (Brown, 2003): survival of the fittest as determined by the accumulation of wealth and endorsing "ruthless competitive individualism" to achieve one's goals (Giroux, 2005, p. 8). Those individuals who deviate from this model are chastised for their failure to embrace their agency and improve the financial, health or educational components of their lives (Coakley, 2011; Kendall, 2003). There is limited scope to appreciate that a person's current situation is shaped by factors beyond individual choice, such as the amount of opportunities available to them, the quality of the opportunities and the environment in which they become available. Consequently, for example, it has been suggested that neoliberal rhetoric rationalises poverty one-dimensionally, as a personal failure to embrace the work ethic required to climb out of despondency (Harvey, 2007).

Thorsen and Lie (2006) go further in their attempts to outline neoliberalism, concluding that it also includes a stance in relation to moral virtue itself. The “good” and “virtuous” person in neoliberal society is:

one who is able to access the relevant markets and function as a competent actor in these markets. He or she is willing to accept the risks associated with participating in free markets, and to adapt to rapid changes arising from such participation (Friedman 1980). (Thorsen & Lie, 2006, p. 15)

The idea that neoliberalism presupposes a prototype for the good and virtuous person also relates to *governmentality*. Foucault's analysis of governmentality in *The Birth of Biopolitics* suggests that a key feature of neoliberalism is the explicit acknowledgement that neither the market nor economic competition and individualism are part of the *natural* order of things (or individuals). In other words, the ideals, values, and principles on which neoliberalism is grounded "must be actively instituted, maintained, reassessed and, if need be, reinserted at all levels of society" (Foucault, 2008, p. 20). Hence, for Foucault, the good and virtuous person in neoliberal society, *Homo Economicus* (e.g., Hamann, 2009), can only be fostered through social mechanisms that are exclusively ordered and organised around market values. Forms of subjectivity must be constructed, brought into being, and maintained by social mechanisms of subjectification. As Hamann (2009) has suggested, "economic man" is a subject that must be produced by way of forms of knowledge and relations of power aimed at encouraging and reinforcing individual practices of subjectification" (p. 42).

Accordingly, the notion of neoliberal governmentality (e.g., Foucault, 1996; Rose, 1999) posits the invention and operationalization of various rational programmes and techniques that try to "conduct the conduct" of individual behaviour in order to obtain specific ends (Rose, 1999). Social mechanisms and practices create the conditions for enunciating "serious statements" designed to shape individual conduct from a distance (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983; Foucault, 1996). As Barnett (2010) has highlighted, this implies that governmentality involves "fields of action" that are not typically thought of as political, such as medicine, education, religion, and popular culture. Ong's (1999) account of this form of neoliberal governmentality argues that these "fields of action" manipulate cultural discourse in order to shape and sculpt people into particular sorts of economic subjects who are consistent with the aims and objectives of particular strategies of accumulation. According to Foucault, from this perspective, neoliberal politics is no longer simply viewed as the analysis of processes, but rather, as the analysis of "the strategic programming of individuals' activity" (Foucault, 2008, p. 223).

As discussed above, the normalisation of such strategic programming may involve numerous “fields of action” that range from medicine, to health, to education, and Nafstad et al. (2007) have recognised the need to situate psychological research within such debate. Rose (2008) has argued that psychology and society are reciprocal and inextricable to the extent that the very inception of psychology “may be traced to the pressure of practical needs” (Burt, 1927, p. 5). For example, these “practical needs” arose from a desire to manage individuals effectively within a range of institutions, such as schools, factories, and the military. For some, psychology, inevitably, continues to evolve in accordance with dominant socio-political values and beliefs. For example, Binkley (2011) has critiqued the positive psychology movement (Seligman, 2000), arguing that its aim is to enhance individuals’ happiness through cultivating a capacity to repeatedly envisage oneself in a favourable light. In alignment with neoliberal values, positive psychology therefore places the onus of a person’s happiness on themselves and normalises the belief that unhappiness is the price to pay for allowing apathy and turpitude to guide life choices (Binkley, 2011). In this paper, we propose that there is a need to take stock of our knowledge production in the psychological sciences, particularly in relation to the notion of neoliberal governmentality. We focus specifically on the idea that current trends in the attachment literature might be thought of as a neoliberal “rationalization program” or a “technology of governance.”

Attachment Theory

Bowlby’s (1969, 1982, 1973, 1980) theory suggests that infants are biologically predisposed to form selective bonds with special and proximate caring figures in their environment. According to the theory, formative discrimination of attachment figures begins in infancy, when proximity to significant others is of critical importance to the maintenance and restoration of safety. Attachment theorists (e.g., Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Hall, 1978; Bowlby, 1973; Sroufe & Waters, 1977) have argued that different patterns of cognition, affect, and behaviour develop in response to caregivers’ sensitivity, availability, and responsiveness to infants’ desire for proximity.

As young children develop, attachment theory predicts that the experiences of care and support provided by key caregivers help them to construct (or not) “a feeling of security and help-seeking behaviors that function to protect them in situations of distress and to facilitate their exploration of the social world in general” (Duchesne & Larose, 2007, p. 1502). These systems of cognition, affect, and behaviour are early reflections of what Bowlby termed *internal working models* that are constructed in response to the attachment experiences that individuals encounter. These internal working models can be thought of as a psychological organisation that serves to guide beliefs with respect to important issues such as (a) the availability of key attachment figures as a source of comfort and security, (b) judgements about self-worth and one’s own deservedness in close relationships, and (c) how best to deal with and regulate encountered distress (Cook, 2000; Duchesne & Larose, 2007; Sroufe & Waters, 1977). When individuals develop a *secure* working model they adopt a positive internal representation of themselves in attachment contexts, viewing attachment figures as psychologically available and responsive and developing a positive sense of their self-worth. However, when they develop an *insecure* working model they adopt a negative internal representation, fearing rejection or inconsistent responses from attachment figures and adopting a negative sense of self (Duchesne & Larose, 2007).

Bowlby (1979/2005) hypothesised attachment as an integral part of human existence throughout the lifespan. Researchers (e.g., Bartholomew, 1990; Shaver, Collins, & Clark, 1996) have suggested that long-term effects of early attachment experiences are predominantly a function of the persistence of internal working models into adulthood. However, it is also necessary that the significant attachment bonds that played a central role in initial development of attachment working models in childhood are gradually (but never entirely) relinquished and that additional affectional bonds are formed with close significant others through adulthood. These new affectional bonds may also serve to modify and rework internal working models over time.

The research on adult attachment has diverged into two distinct research traditions. These lines of research are both derived from assumptions at the heart of Bowlby’s theory (Jacobowitz,

Curran, & Moller, 2002) yet have evolved according to underlying assumptions and measurement techniques of contrasting subcultures (Bartholomew & Shaver, 1998). Many of the distinctions between these two lines of enquiry are reflected in how researchers have approached the measurement of attachment constructs. On the one hand, are researchers who “tend to think psychodynamically, be interested in clinical problems, prefer interview measures and behavioral observations over questionnaires, study relatively small groups of subjects” (Bartholomew & Shaver, 1998, p. 27). On the other hand, are personality and social psychologists “who tend to think in terms of personality traits and social interactions, be interested in normal subject populations, prefer simple questionnaire measures, study relatively large samples” (Bartholomew & Shaver, 1998, p. 27). Not surprisingly, these different lines of research give rise to significant distinctions in how attachment research is underpinned conceptually, how it is approached methodologically, and how results are interpreted. In this paper, we discuss an avenue of research that has conceptualised attachment styles in a social psychological sense.

Self-report has been a common method for investigating adult attachment styles for researchers in the social psychological paradigm. However, there has been debate in the literature regarding the most conceptually useful way of assessing them. Brennan, Clark, and Shaver’s (1998) meta-analysis of 19 adult attachment inventories identified that most inventories appeared to be underpinned by two orthogonal dimensions: attachment *anxiety* (a concern about the availability and responsiveness of partners in close relationships) and attachment *avoidance* (a discomfort with reliance on others for attachment related purposes). These dimensions have been described by Shaver and Mikulincer (2002, p. 135) as “best conceptualised as regions in a two-dimensional space that is conceptually parallel to the space defined...in Ainsworth et al.’s (1978) summary of research on infant-mother attachment.” Specifically, *low* levels of *both* attachment-related anxiety and avoidance correspond to a secure attachment style. *High* levels of anxiety and *low* levels of avoidance are conceptually consistent with an anxious classification, and the region of space where anxiety is low and avoidance is high reflects avoidance. With regard to the avoidant area of the

conceptualisation, researchers (e.g., Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Bifulco, Moran, Ball, & Bernazzi, 2002a, 2002b) have identified that there appears to be a conceptual distinction between *dismissive* avoidance (low levels of attachment related anxiety and high levels of avoidance) and *fearful* avoidance (high levels of both anxiety and avoidance). The conceptual logic of such inventories is that they seek to assess the degree to which individuals' styles of relating seem to reflect the categorical differences in relating styles that characterise each attachment classification.

Ultimately, attachment styles have been hypothesised to reflect an organised pattern of relational expectations, emotions, and behaviour that result from individuals' specific attachment histories and give rise to particular scripts that reflect cognitive and emotional schema that are likely to be called on in times of distress (Mikulincer, Shaver, & Pereg, 2003). Variations in attachment security reflect different beliefs about how best to manage distress, trust in the goodwill of others, and a sense of self-efficacy in relation to drawing on external and internal resources to deal with threat (Shaver & Hazan, 1993). Specifically, securely attached individuals (through participation in one or more secure attachment relationships) tend to learn that distress is manageable and not overwhelming, they can overcome the various stressors they encounter, others have inherently good intentions, and seeking social and emotional support in times of need is acceptable and valuable (Mikulincer et al., 2003). Such psychological characteristics form the cornerstones of individuals' attachment styles and it is logical to suggest that they may have a significant link to the manner in which individuals deal with and experience life. It has been popular for the literature to suggest that working models of attachment are related to a range of biopsychosocial phenomena, including psychiatric disorder, social functioning, stress responses, coping, health z behaviour, and psychological wellbeing (e.g., Carr, 2012; Ciechanowski & Katon, 2006; Ditzen et al., 2008; Maunder & Hunter, 2001; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012).

Attachment Theory and Social Conscience in Relation to Neoliberalism

Given the integrative nature of Bowlby's ideas and their far reaching implications for various spheres of human existence, knowledge frontiers in relation to attachment theory are continually

expanding. In relation to this, we believe that for attachment theory to evolve and develop as a guiding body of knowledge it will be essential to reflect on the ethical and moral implications of research questions, findings, theoretical developments, and new frontiers in knowledge production *in the context of* current socio-political trends. What do our questions, findings, and knowledge *mean* when we interrogate them from particular social, ethical, and moral perspectives? How do our questions, theories, data, and knowledge production appear when we adopt a particular political or social conscience? To illustrate our argument, we have chosen to interrogate (as a case example) recent directions in attachment research that (for us) raise significant issues in relation to this. Readers should keep in mind that for expedience we have selected to interrogate one area of research seeking to push the frontiers of the attachment literature (which we applaud). In order to fully outline our argument, space limits us to in depth critical discussion of our chosen example alone.

Case Example: Attachment-Avoidance as a Benefit

In an interesting development in the attachment literature, Ein-Dor and his colleagues (e.g., Ein-Dor, Mikulincer, Doron, & Shaver, 2010; Ein-Dor, Reizer, Shaver, & Dotan, 2012) have examined the assumption that there may be certain circumstances where it might be considered adaptive to possess characteristics of an insecure-avoidant internal working model of attachment. From this perspective, the researchers argued that qualities such as self-reliance and an ability to function without close proximity to significant others might better equip individuals for life in particular contexts where such attributes are either necessary or valued.

Ein-Dor et al. (2010) present arguments suggesting that, given approximately half of the world's population are thought to be insecure in relation to attachment organisation (e.g., Cassidy & Shaver, 2008; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007), then it would seem paradoxical (particularly in an evolutionary sense) that attachment theorists have uncovered few (if any) associated benefits to attachment-related insecurity. Exploring the potential explanations for this paradox, Ein-Dor et al.

(2010) allege that contemporary researchers have been myopic in their focus on what is currently considered individual mental health in modern society. In other words, research has exclusively relied on individual well-being, mating, and reproduction as the key outcomes of interest, whereas it may be that beyond a focus on wellbeing at the level of the *individual* there are evolutionary, *group* level advantages related to (for example) survival.

For example, it is suggested that “the avoidant pattern may be associated with quick, independent responses to threat, which may at times increase the survival chances of group members by solving the survival problem or demonstrating ways to escape it...the anxious pattern may be associated with sensitivity and quick detection of dangers and threats, which alert other group members to danger and the need for protection or escape” (Ein-Dor et al., 2010, p. 129). As Frankenhuis (2010) has suggested, “the central idea is that insecure attachment styles are detrimental to the individual, yet prevalent: this ‘evolutionary paradox’ is resolved by positing group-level benefits. On this view, insecurely attached individuals are evolutionary altruists: they incur a fitness cost to enhance the fitness of other individuals in the group” (p. 1).

In a recent study that further explored this avenue of research, Ein-Dor et al. (2012) examined the hypothesis that attachment insecurity also might be positively linked to certain benefits on an individual level. They argued that certain domains of human endeavour may implicitly encourage, reward, and be more suited to characteristics linked to an insecure-avoidant model of attachment. The study examined two fields that the authors believed would be particularly reflective of such domains: professional singles tennis and computer science. High-level tennis was selected due to the fact that it requires long periods of solitary travel (i.e., the tour) during which players are isolated and have less opportunity to rely on social support and connections with close others. Furthermore, there is little opportunity to rely on others for support during matches and a significant degree of self-control and self-reliance is required. Computer science was selected on the

grounds that the authors considered it a field where long hours of solitary work without social support and interaction are commonplace.

Results suggested that when controlling for factors such as emotional self-efficacy, coping strategy use, and amount of training, elite level tennis players' scores on attachment-avoidance positively predicted a higher ranking over 16 months on the tour. Furthermore, with computer scientists, higher levels of avoidance predicted higher levels of satisfaction with their chosen career path. While the authors acknowledge a number of limitations in their methods, they made the following conclusions:

Here we have shown that attachment-related avoidance...offers certain advantages in two cool, competitive, somewhat mechanical and individualistic lines of endeavor, professional tennis and computer science, which in many other respects do not seem similar at all...

Studies like the ones reported here...offer a new perspective on the strengths of individuals who have long been viewed as deficient and poorly adapted. (Ein-Dor et al., 2012, pp. 16-17).

Our interpretation of this quote is that the authors view the study as supporting the hypothesis that attachment insecurity can be viewed as a strength when considered in relation to *particular* social contexts. Whilst we commend Ein-Dor and colleagues for carving new directions for discussion and debate concerning unconventional benefits of certain forms of attachment, we are uncomfortable with the potential implications of the authors' findings in terms of matters of social conscience. Interpreted differently, these findings suggest that in such "cool, competitive, mechanical, and individualistic" endeavors where neoliberal values such as the pursuit of normative success, individualism, performativity, and production are emphasized, then individuals may be better equipped to "produce" and "succeed" (and be satisfied doing so) if they possess an insecure working model of attachment. In order to provide a conceptual rationale for this argument and a platform for

critical interrogation we utilize Foucauldian (Foucault, 1975, 1991) theory and, more specifically, the notions of normalization, governance, and control in the context of a neoliberal society.

Back to Psychology and Neoliberal Governmentality

As discussed earlier, sociologists concerned with the construction of the life-world and how certain “ways of being” are normalized and legitimized in particular social settings have drawn on Foucault’s (Foucault, 1975) ideas of disciplinary power and governmentality. A distinctive feature of disciplinary power is that it is designed to teach individuals to conceptualize the world and respond to power in predictable ways (Allen, 2012; Foucault, 1975). For Foucault (1975), the goal of such disciplinary power is conformity and coming to live by society’s dominant standards and values; as we discussed earlier, the idea of normalization is pervasive in the neoliberal world.

A number of authors (e.g., Bourdieu, 1998; Couldry, 2008; Giroux, 2002) have highlighted how the forces of neoliberalism and corporate culture have rapidly gained ascendancy and are increasingly positioned at the hub of a life-world within which market-based values and identities (e.g., individualism, performativity, competition, economic gain, productivity) predominate. The result of this trend has been the steady normalisation of increasingly controlling and invasive practices that further legitimize and firmly situate market-driven values at the heart of individual and collective life. In his essay, *The Essence of Neoliberalism*, Bourdieu (1998) suggests, for example, that key neoliberal values such as “levels of competition,” once traditionally characteristic of relations *between* corporations and organisations, have been redefined so that they are now deeply entrenched *within* organizations:

Competition is extended to individuals themselves, through the individualization of the wage relationship: establishment of individual performance objectives, individual performance evaluations, permanent evaluation, individual salary increases or granting of bonuses as a function of competence and of individual merit; individualized career paths; strategies of ‘delegating responsibility’ tending to ensure the self-exploitation of staff who, simple wage laborers in relations of strong hierarchical dependence, are at the same time held

responsible for their sales, their products, their branch, their store, etc. as though they were independent contractors. This pressure toward 'self-control' extends workers' 'involvement' according to the techniques of 'participative management' considerably beyond management level. All of these are techniques of rational domination that impose over-involvement in work (and not only among management) and work under emergency or high-stress conditions. And they converge to weaken or abolish collective standards or solidarities (para 8).

Furthermore, Couldry (2008) has discussed the normalisation of discourse concerning labour and leisure time, where there has been an increasing trend to transform the (already invasive) concept of "workers' labour time" into "the employer's time" (i.e., time that *belongs* to the employer) and, extend the employer's time even more invasively, where workers' leisure time (e.g., time for eating, family, playing, resting) is infringed by employers (to better meet productivity and competitive targets) under the guise of "the gift of flexitime" (Couldry, 2008).

Further still, as Gorz (1999) has suggested, individuals are unlikely to completely surrender their lives and identities to neoliberal values without subtle yet persuasive forms of discourse and programs of rationality. Gorz (1999) has highlighted the important role played by social and cultural structures (such as medicine, science, or education) that increasingly project prestige and legitimization onto those who are able to develop a passionate connection, attachment, or commitment to the values and goals of their employer. Furthermore, *psychological* features of individual identities (such as self-control or other aspects of personality) can also be subsumed by the normalisation process and are themselves deployed as the "errand boy" of super-ordinate aims and value structures (Binkley, 2011). For Gorz (1999), this edges closer to a "total mobilisation of the worker's personality" and uncomfortably evokes ideas that resemble Wright Mills's (1959) famous concerns about persons becoming "compliant robots" fitted to a society relentlessly pursuing capitalist ideology (Binkley, 2011).

Critics have lamented that psychology has been swept up in a tide that both reflects and serves neoliberal ends. For example, some (e.g., Binkley, 2011; Gore, 2010; Wilson, 2008) have reacted to the emergence of the positive psychology movement which, they suggest, is among a number of efforts to redefine the nature of psychological wellbeing so that it aligns individual and collective life with neoliberal values (see Binkley, 2011 for a review). As Binkley (2011) describes:

At the centre of these efforts is the belief that happiness results from the cognitive outlooks of individuals: to the extent that people can be brought to assess their situations and themselves in a favourable light, the resulting emotional flush will move them to perform...on a superior level...The new discourse on happiness has influenced a range of institutional, managerial, and planning activities, variously centred on the government of individuals, communities, and organisations, through appeals to their capacity to perceive situations positively. (p. 374)

The central point here is *psychology's* relationship to governmentality (Foucault, 1991). For Foucault (1991), governmentality involves both micro-technologies, through which individuals “govern themselves” and macro-technologies, through which the state and social authorities govern individuals, groups, and organisations. A significant feature of neoliberal governmentality is that individuals are seduced, persuaded, and prompted to cultivate dispositions thought to be correlated with an active pursuit of particular goals such as normative success, production, and profit. Such persuasion and prompting relies on cultural and structural discourse that serves to reward, rationalise, and idealise these neoliberal dispositions (Gorz, 1999).

These technologies are more persuasive and effectively implemented as part of the cultural discourse when they are *legitimized*. To this end, some movements and trends in knowledge construction from academic research function as technologies in the sense that they legitimize programs of knowledge that seek to understand and influence individuals’ psychology in ways that best serve neoliberal ends (Binkley, 2011). There is concern that cultivating psychological characteristics that support and further the neoliberal agenda “comes at a price;” that is, the

subjugation of deep, spiritually and existentially meaningful aspects of human experience to neoliberal market rationality (Wilson, 2008).

Ein-Dor et al.'s (2012) research seems (to us) to be conducted in the spirit of looking for a positive way to view attachment insecurity by focusing on the theoretical and empirical fit between particular features of an insecure-avoidant working model (e.g., a high degree of self-reliance, decreased tendency to express a need for comfort, reduced expectation of emotional support from others) and particular positive outcomes in specific, "cool, competitive, somewhat mechanical and individualistic" (Ein-Dor et al., 2010, p. 764) occupational contexts. Their analysis appears to support this hypothetical fit, leading them to suggest that insecurity might be viewed as a strength.

First, we take issue with the meaning extracted from their findings in relation to the conceptualisation of the internal working model of attachment as it was developed by Bowlby (1973, based on Craik's [1943] line of thought). We take the opportunity here to revisit briefly the idea of the internal working model. According to Craik (1943), the internal working model might be thought of as a small scale *internal model* of *external reality* that serves to parallel the world and the individual's relationship with it. For Craik, (1943), the vital feature of internal working models is that they aim at an accurate representation and adequately simulate the external world they represent, so that they play a functional role in guiding individuals in relation to planning, relating, responding, and existing in the world (in accordance with how the individual has experienced it).

A key assumption for Bowlby (1973) was the notion that actual experiences of care and support provided by caregivers help construct internal models that function to protect individuals in situations of distress and facilitate psychological and emotional existence in the world. These complex templates for thinking, feeling, and behaving comprise the internal working models of attachment. Internal working models have been thought of as a psychological organisation that directs patterns of cognition, affect, and behaviour in relation to important issues such as expectations, thoughts, and feelings about the self, others, and the self in relation to others (Bowlby, 1969, 1973; Cook, 2000; Sroufe & Waters, 1977).

Possessed of a secure working model, people adopt a deep-rooted, positive internal representation of themselves, viewing the world as psychologically available, trustworthy, and responsive, and developing a positive sense of themselves in relation to it. However, given an insecure working model, they adopt a negative representation of themselves, fearing and expecting rejection or inconsistent responses from the world and harshly judging themselves (Duchesne & Larose, 2007). In line with Craik's (1943) arguments, the development of working models of attachment might be considered an adaptive response in that they reflect internalised patterns that emerge as logical adaptation to the attachment-related features of the individual's specific environment.

In relation to the above, when deliberating the potential *benefits* of an insecure-avoidant internal working model of attachment one should keep in mind *what* one is deliberating: the extent to which an internal representation of the world that centres around the deep-rooted belief that the self is unworthy of (and others are an unlikely source of) love and support (and elicits a psychological organisation that aims to maximize distance from attachment figures, avoid interdependence, strive for self-reliance and control, suppress distressing thoughts, and repress pain and vulnerability) might be viewed as desirable. Clearly, such deliberation depends significantly on some critical issues—desirable *for what, for whom, and at what cost?*

We believe that such questions cannot and should not be addressed apolitically or aphilosophically. In his essay *Does the Free Market Corrode Moral Character?* philosopher John Gray argued that “Free markets corrode some aspects of character while enhancing others. Whether the result is good, on balance, depends on how one envisions a good life...the question can only be answered by understanding how different systems promote divergent types of human character” (p. 1). Our purpose in what follows is to enter into this debate by shining light into the specific area of attachment research we have outlined.

Good for What, for Whom? At What Cost?

The implication raised by Ein-Dor et al. (2012) is that insecure-avoidance might be good for success in domains characterised as cool, mechanical, competitive, and individualistic and that it might also render Individuals more likely to be happy with their choice of the domain in question (e.g., tennis and computer science). Our first argument is that we should only be comfortable endorsing an insecure-avoidant working model as a strength if we also are comfortable that these identified benefits did not come at a significant cost. In a recent review in *World Psychiatry* Mikulincer and Shaver (2012) suggested that “consistently compatible results have been identified in recent studies...attachment insecurities are associated with depression, clinically significant anxiety, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), PTSD, suicidal tendencies, and eating disorders” (p. 111). In the bigger picture, we would caution against considering a link between insecure-avoidance and outcomes such as normative success, productivity, and satisfaction with domain choice as positive if such insecurity is simultaneously detrimental to mental health and wellbeing.

Furthermore, we also consider it particularly important to investigate whether the identified “positives” (e.g., superior performance and enhanced satisfaction with existence in certain individualistic cultures) associated with an insecure-avoidant working model are not, in the end, the very mechanisms that bring about the identified “negatives” (e.g., compromised mental health and well-being). In other words, association between insecure-avoidance, normative success, and satisfaction with cool, mechanical, competitive, individualistic domain choices might *in itself* be one of the central mechanisms through which attachment insecurity *leads* to decrements in mental and psychological wellbeing. In support of this possibility, an increasing concern in high level sport (one of the domains chosen for Ein-Dor et al.’s investigation) is that athletes’ relentless pursuit of (and dedication to) normative success, hierarchical reward structures, and power and privilege that is tied to economic and competitive status is often a central risk factor for mental health and wellbeing. For example, research (e.g., Baum, 2005; Kokotailo, Henry, & Kosciak, 1996) has hinted that athletes may demonstrate an increased risk for suicide, higher prevalence of subclinical and clinical eating

disorders (Sundgot-Borgen & Torstveit, 2004), and significant risk of mental health and well-being struggles following retirement, linked to an extended inability to focus on identity development *outside* of the pursuit of athletic goals and success (see Baum, 2005). As Andre Agassi intimated,

I play tennis for a living even though I hate tennis...hate it with a dark and secret passion and always have. If you're at the top of tennis you're on tour 30-plus weeks of the year... everything revolves around tennis. Every decision you make tennis is at the back of your mind...I know this for myself – it's something you've done since you were six years old and there's a sense that if you stop giving 100% you're doomed to failure and that's unacceptable. No wonder so many players hate their sport – the surprise is that so few admit it (Agassi, 2009, p.3).

Ultimately, for some authors (e.g., Anderson, 2013; Coakley, 2011; Murphy & Waddington, 2007), contemporary elite, organized, competitive, commercial sports (EOCCS) have been utilized to affirm neoliberal ideology. For example, Coakley (2011) highlights how contemporary EOCCS (a) strongly emphasizes a belief in competition as the primary basis for determining merit and allocating substantial financial rewards, (b) reinforces the idea that victories in competitive, hierarchical reward structures are proof of ability, moral worth, and virtue, and (c) reinforces commitment to meritocracy and the idea that economic winners somehow deserve power and privilege, whereas economic failure is the result of poor choices or weak character. Such values and beliefs serve to normalize hierarchies based on status and socio-economic inequality as inevitable products of merit-based differences (Coakley, 2011). A significant and legitimate concern is that athletes' very devotion to such neoliberal ideals is the most significant threat to their spiritual, psychological, and physical wellbeing and the extent to which they are required to, and seduced into, subjugating their wellbeing to these values might (at worst) be considered exploitative and inhumane (Anderson, 2013).

Our point, in relation neoliberal governmentality (Foucault, 1991), is that psychological research can inadvertently serve to rationalize and legitimize human commitment to, and

achievement of neoliberal goals. This is achieved through the identification of psychological features that are positively correlated with such goals and by depicting such association as a “benefit.” Such psychological research risks becoming a technology via which specific “ways of being” that may in fact make individuals increasingly vulnerable to psychological harm are championed, encouraged, and made acceptable. As Frankenhuis (2010) has suggested, “insecure attachment styles may be adaptive, for instance, *if* one grows up in a world where people generally provide little support” (p. 172). We are concerned that an insecure-avoidant internal working model (i.e., a response to external reality fostering a deep rooted belief in the need to suppress one’s vulnerability and hide deeper emotional needs for connection and support) might be conceptualised as useful (i.e., it relates to productivity and success in neoliberal society) in occupational contexts that require individuals to sacrifice aspects of *themselves*. From this perspective we wonder if our concern as attachment researchers ought also to be with whether the sacrifice is worth it, with who *ultimately* benefits, and with the ways in which our (typically value-neutral) academic contributions might be implicated in social and cultural life outside of the laboratory. As Gergen (2001) correctly identified, such deliberation and interrogation is an ethical and moral responsibility that we believe ought to feature in the development of attachment theorizing and research.

A Critical Voice in a Neoliberal World

We contend that there is need for a critical voice in the attachment literature. As Fox, Prilleltensky and Austin (2009) have suggested:

Psychology is not, and cannot be, a neutral endeavour conducted by scientists and practitioners detached from social and political circumstances. It is a human and social endeavour. Psychologists live in specific social contexts. They are influenced by differing interests and complex power dynamics. Mainstream psychologists too often shy away from the resulting moral, social, and political implications. (p. 8)

In their vision for the development of a critical psychology, Fox et al. (2009) asked a number of key questions: (a) Does the field promote (wittingly or unwittingly) the status quo in society?, (b) Does

the field promote social justice or injustice for the population of interest or for society at large?, (c) Is there awareness of societal repercussions of knowledge creation and practices, or is the field oblivious to potential negative effects?, and (d) Do researchers declare their values or assume what they do is value free? In relation to these questions, we hope that our discussion illustrates the need for greater interrogation of research at the frontiers of attachment theory in light of neoliberalism and social conscience.

Bowlby (1988) spoke of the importance of “lasting psychological connectedness between human beings” and “the propensity to make strong emotional bonds as a basic component of human nature” (p. 8). It is far beyond the scope of this paper to sketch out a blueprint or direction of what a critical consciousness in attachment literature might look like. However, our initial thoughts are that it ought to recognise and advocate the tremendous capacity that the quality of these strong emotional bonds and lasting psychological connections can have for enriching lives. What attachment theory offers is (a) a comprehensive and integrative framework for conceptualising strong emotional bonds, (b) empirical support for their centrality in relation to the quality of individual and collective life, and (c) a conceptual grasp of the relational conditions necessary to nurture or inhibit them. Armed with such knowledge, we would suggest that this places attachment theorists in a strong position to move beyond “the smoothing out of society’s rough edges” towards a reconceptualization of social structures more likely to lead to social justice and human wellbeing in relation to emotional connectedness.

As Erica Burman (2008) has noted in *Deconstructing Developmental Psychology*, this means that we are not only concerned with,

what developmental psychology has found and the claims that it makes, but also...the significance of the types of research and research outcomes in three ways; the circumstances in which the research was carried out; the social and political influences that made the topic seem relevant; and the role and impact of that research. (p. 6)

Accordingly, sociologists (e.g., Crittenden, 2006; England & Folbre, 2006; Hartford, 2010) have expressed concern over a society that “measures worth and achievement almost solely in terms of money and normative success” (Crittenden, 2006, p. 18). For example, Hartford (2010) argues that there is an increasing sense of “alienation” and erosion of care where care is most needed in neoliberal society. This she argues, is a likely consequence of the fact that (a) care *itself* is now bought, sold, and offered as a commodity, and (b) the nonmarket work of everyday care (in familial and extended contexts) has been explicitly excluded from most economic and political analyses of what matters (England & Folbre, 2006). Consequently, care is increasingly marginalised by policy in contexts where its benefits (in a neoliberal sense) are not explicitly obvious in economic terms.

Connectedly, Eichner (2010) has highlighted the mounting pressure that has been placed on family life and caretaking in American society, where people work increasingly long hours and both mothers and fathers are enticed into the workplace. For Eichner (2010), what is particularly surprising has been the muted political and legal response (in comparison to policy in other countries) to such work-family conflict (i.e., provision of legal and political measures designed to protect family life, provide a platform for familial care-giving, and ameliorate work-family conflict). She has argued that such “inaction” in law and public policy reflects the dominant neoliberal ideology insofar that it fails to acknowledge the importance of dependency in human life and seems to reflect an abandonment of the state’s most basic responsibilities, explicitly individualising responsibility for managing and ameliorating work-life conflict. Given this significant concern over the erosion of care in neoliberal society, attachment theory, for example, seems ideally positioned to add conceptual clarity to the volume of criticism concerning the changing nature of care, *why* care is eroding, the potential *consequences* of such erosion, and guidance in relation to the social conditions necessary to reverse the phenomenon.

Conclusion

As Rose (2008) has argued, in contrast to its frequently presumed value-neutrality, psychology is inextricably linked to the social, political, cultural and economic tides of our times. Ultimately, our arguments rest on the premise that there is a need to consider carefully the development of psychological knowledge in key areas such as attachment theory, in relation to questions asked, knowledge generated, and the deeper meaning and broader discourse derived from such questions and knowledge.

It is important to note that our purpose has not been to convey the message that psychology (or attachment theory) is somehow corrupt or a “willing” neoliberal servant. Neither do we wish to suggest that the research we have interrogated in this article is in any way ill-intended. To the contrary, we know that this is not the case and we applaud the researchers for opening up new frontiers in attachment research and for asking questions that serve to stimulate healthy debate. Our hope is that our arguments have served to highlight the complex social, political, and philosophical issues raised by the relations among neoliberalism, governance, and psychology.

We also acknowledge that it might be alleged that our paper has been narrow in its focus on a particular niche frontier in the attachment theory literature and its specific relationship to neoliberal governmentality. Perhaps we only have identified a “needle in a haystack,” to which our arguments and concerns are relevant. In response, we would argue that not every vein of attachment research will raise the same issues and critical concerns when interrogated. Rather, we sought simply to demonstrate the political, ethical, and philosophical issues that *can* arise when we carefully deliberate the meaning of the knowledge we construct. The case study in question reflects an interesting example of where such interrogation raises potential “red flags” in relation to critical consciousness and in the current economic, political, and cultural terrain we believe it is important to discuss them.

Ultimately, the key questions we sought to deliberate are (a) whether the psychological strengths necessary to thrive on the current neoliberal playing field of everyday life also cultivate a significant sacrifice or trade-off in relation to psychological existence, (b) whether we (as attachment

theorists) truly believe that the trade-off is worth it, and (c) whether we elect to cultivate knowledge frontiers and ideas that serve either to bolster the status quo, to merely “cope” with its human consequences, *or* to challenge it critically. In formulating his free market economics, Adam Smith simultaneously feared that market-based values and principles would not, in the end, remain confined to the marketplace. He foresaw that free markets, to large extent, could cultivate a certain kind of value system that leaks into the heart of the life-world and inner psychological existence of workers themselves.

For us, Bowlby’s conceptualisation of the internal working model of attachment is one of the most comprehensive and integrative efforts to date, that has theorised a significant psychological cornerstone of human existence. With it, we have been better able to scaffold our attempts at fostering, understanding, nurturing, and developing lives that are associated with peace, tranquillity, compassion, and a sense of loving connectedness to others. We also have gained greater understanding of the sorts of qualities (e.g., care, empathy, compassion) societies and political systems might seek to encourage and protect if they are to prioritise the psychological lives of people. What constitutes a “good life” is clearly a matter of philosophy. However, as attachment researchers we firmly believe that it is important to utilise our particular understanding of what appear to be crucial dimensions of the self (internal working models) towards ends that prioritise the quality of psychological life. This heavily depends on the questions we ask and on our interrogation of these questions in the context of the neoliberal moment.

As Couldry (2008) has suggested, “the ‘truths’ of neoliberalism would be unacceptable if stated openly, even if their consequences unfold before our eyes every day” and “those truths must therefore be translated into an acceptable version of the values and compulsions on which that cruelty depends” (p. 3). Accordingly, perhaps we, as attachment researchers, are concerned that in the example discussed we have glimpsed how attachment theory and the knowledge it creates might be unwittingly drawn into translating the unacceptable into the acceptable, in the interests of neoliberalism - but at the expense of psychological wellbeing. Perhaps we are calling for the

emergence of a critical consciousness, a critical voice in attachment theory (and beyond) that seeks to interrogate carefully psychological knowledge constructed outside of a value-neutral framework and in the interests of social justice. Perhaps, like Gergen (2001), we would welcome discussion in relation to (a) the future development of our field and (b) our field's role in neoliberal society.

References

- Agassi, A. (2009). *Open: An Autobiography*. New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.
- Ainsworth, M. D. S., Blehar, M. C., Waters, E., & Wall, S. (1978). *Patterns of attachment: A psychological study of the strange situation*. Hillsdale: Erlbaum.
- Allen, A. (2012). Cultivating the myopic learner: The shared project of high-stakes and low-stakes assessment. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 33, 641-659.
- Anderson, E. (2013). I9 and the Transformation of Youth Sport. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 37, 97-111.
- Barnett, C. (2010). Publics and markets: what's wrong with neoliberalism? In S. J. Smith, R. Pain, S.A. Marston, & J.P. Jones III (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Social Geography* (pp. 269–296). London: Sage.
- Bartholomew, K. (1990). Avoidance of intimacy: An attachment perspective. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 7, 147–178.
- Bartholomew, K., & Horowitz, L. M. (1991). Attachment styles among young adults: A test of a four-category model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 61, 226–244.
- Bartholomew, K., & Shaver, P. R. (1998). Methods of assessing adult attachment: Do they converge? In J. A. Simpson & W. S. Rholes (Eds.), *Attachment theory and close relationships* (pp. 25–45). New York: Guilford Press.
- Baum, A.L. (2005). Suicide in athletes: A review and commentary. *Clinical Sports Medicine*, 24, 853–69.
- Bifulco, A., Moran, P. M., Ball, C., & Bernazzi, O. (2002a). Adult attachment style 1: Its relationship to clinical depression. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 37, 50–59.
- Bifulco, A., Moran, P. M., Ball, C., & Lillie, A. (2002b). Adult attachment style 2: Its relationship to psychosocial depressive vulnerability. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 37, 60–67.
- Binkley, S. (2011). Happiness, Positive Psychology and the Program of Neoliberal Governmentality. *Subjectivity*, 4(4), 371–394.
- Boas, T. C., & Gans-Morse, J. (2009). Neoliberalism: From New Liberal Philosophy to Anti-Liberal Slogan. *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 44(2), 137–161.
- Bourdieu, P. The Essence of Neoliberalism, translated by Jeremy J. Shapiro, *Le Monde diplomatique* (December 1998).
- Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss: Vol. 1. Attachment*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1973). *Attachment and loss: Vol. 2. Separation: Anxiety and anger*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1979/2005). *The making and breaking of affectional bonds*. New York: Routledge (1st ed.

- pub. 1979, 2nd ed. pub. 2005).
- Bowlby, J. (1980). *Attachment and loss: Vol. 3. Loss: Sadness and depression*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1982). *Attachment and loss: Vol. 1. Attachment* (2nd ed.). New York: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1988). *A secure base: Parent–child attachment and healthy human development*. New York: Basic Books.
- Brennan, K. A., Clark, C. L., & Shaver, P. R. (1998). Self-report measurement of adult attachment: An integrative overview. In J. A. Simpson & W. S. Rholes (Eds.), *Attachment theory and close relationships* (pp. 46–76). New York: Guilford.
- Briggs, A. (1961). The Welfare State in Historical Perspective. *European Journal of Sociology*, 2(2), 221–258.
- Brown, W. (2003). Neo-liberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy. *Theory and Event*, 7(1), 1–43.
- Burman, E. (2008). *Deconstructing Developmental Psychology*. London: Brunner-Routledge.
- Burt, C. (1927). *The Young Delinquent*. London: University of London Press.
- Carr, S. (2012). *Attachment in Sport, Exercise and Wellness*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Cassidy, J., & Shaver, P. R. (Eds.). (2008). *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (2nd ed.). New York: Guilford Press.
- Ciechanowski, P.S., & Katon, W.J. (2006). The interpersonal experience of health care through the eyes of patients with diabetes. *Social Sciences and Medicine*, 63, 3067-3079.
- Chomsky, N. (1999). Profit Over People: Neoliberalism and Global Order. New York: Seven Stories Press.
- Coakley, J. (2011). Ideology Doesn't Just Happen: Sports and Neoliberalism. *Curitiba*, 1(1), 67–84.
- Cook, W. L. (2000). Understanding attachment security in family context. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 78, 285–294.
- Couldry, N. (2008). Reality TV, or The Secret Theatre of Neoliberalism. *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, 30, 3-13.
- Craik, K. (1943). *The Nature of Explanation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Crittenden, A. (2006). How Mothers' Work Disappeared. In A. Wharton (Ed.), *Working in America: Continuity, Conflict, and Change* (pp. 18-31). New York: McGraw Hill.
- Ditzen, B., Schmidt, S., Strauss, B., Nater, U. M., Ehlert, U., & Heinrichs, M. (2008). Adult attachment and social support interact to reduce psychological but not cortisol responses to stress. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 64(5), 479–486.

- Dreyfuss, H. and P. Rabinow. (1983) *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Duchesne, S., & Larose, S. (2007). Adolescent parental attachment and academic motivation and performance in early adolescence. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 37, 1501–1521.
- Duménil, G. & Levy, D. (2011). *The crisis of neoliberalism*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Eichner, M. (2010). Families, Human Dignity, and State Support for Caretaking: Why the United States' Failure to Ameliorate the Work-Family Conflict is a Dereliction of the Government's Basic Responsibilities, *North Carolina Law Review*, 8, 1593-1598.
- England, P. & Folbre, N. (2006). Capitalism and the Erosion of Care. In A. Wharton (Ed.), *Working in America: Continuity, Conflict, and Change* (pp. 495-510). New York: McGraw Hill.
- Ein-Dor, T., Mikulincer, M., Doron, G., & Shaver, P. R. (2010). The attachment paradox: How can so many of us (the insecure ones) have no adaptive advantages? *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 5, 123–141.
- Ein-Dor, T., Reizer, A., Shaver, P. R. and Dotan, E. (2012), Standoffish Perhaps, but Successful as Well: Evidence That Avoidant Attachment Can Be Beneficial in Professional Tennis and Computer Science. *Journal of Personality*, 80, 749–768.
- Foucault, M. (1975). *Discipline and Punish*. London: Penguin, 1991.
- Foucault, M. (1991). Governmentality. In G. Burchell, C. Gordon & P. Miller (Eds.), *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (pp 87-104). Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Foucault, M. (1996). *Istoria nebuniei în perioada clasică*. Bucuresti: Humanitas.
- Foucault, M. (2008). *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979*, translated by G. Burchell. In A.I. Davidson, (Ed.), New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Fox, D., Prilleltensky, I., & Austin, S. (2009). Critical Psychology for Social Justice: Concerns and Dilemmas. In D. Fox, I. Prilleltensky & S. Austin (Eds.), *Critical Psychology: An Introduction* (pp. 3-20). London: Sage.
- Frankenhuis, W. E. (2010). Did insecure attachment styles evolve for the benefit of the group? *Frontiers in Psychology*, 1, 172.
- Gergen, K.J. (1994). *Realities and Relationships: Soundings in Social Constructionism*. Cambridge, Harvard University Press.
- Gergen, K. J. (2001). Psychological Science in a Postmodern Context. *The American Psychologist*, 56(10), 803–813.
- Giroux, H. A. (2002). Neoliberalism, Corporate Culture, and the Promise of Higher Education: The University as a Democratic Public Sphere. *Harvard Educational Review*, 72, 425-463,
- Giroux, H. A. (2005). The Terror of Neoliberalism: Rethinking the Significance of Cultural Politics. *College Literature*, 32(1), 1–19.

- Gore, A. (2010). *Bluebird: Women and the New Psychology of Happiness*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.
- Gorz, A. (1999). *Reclaiming Work*. London: Pluto.
- Gray, J. (2010). Does the Free Market Corrode Moral Character? The John Templeton Foundation. Retrieved January 14th, 2014 from <http://www.templeton.org/reason/Essays/BQ%20SPRING%202010.pdf>
- Hamann, T. (2009). Neoliberalism, Governmentality, and Ethics. *Foucault Studies*, 6, 37-59.
- Hartford, I. (2010). My Work Utopia: Pursuing a Satisfactory Work Life Amid an Alienating World. *Human Architecture: Journal of The Sociology of Self-Knowledge*, 8, 167-176.
- Harvey, D. (2005). *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Harvey, D. (2007). Neoliberalism as Creative Destruction. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 610, 21-44.
- Hayek, F. A. (1979). *Law, Legislation and Liberty: A new Statement of the Liberal Principles and Political Economy. Volume III: The Political Order of a Free People*. London: Routledge.
- Jacobvitz, D., Curran, M., & Moller, N. (2002). Measurement of adult attachment: The place of self-report and interview methodologies. *Attachment & Human Development*, 4, 207–215.
- Kendall, G. (2003). What Is Neoliberalism? In *TASA Conference* (pp. 1–6). University of New England.
- Kokotailo, P.K., Henry, B.C., Koscik, R.E., Fleming, M.F., & Landry, G.L. (1996). Substance use and other health risk behaviors in collegiate athletes. *Clinical journal of sport medicine: Official Journal of the Canadian Academy of Sport Medicine*, 6, 183-189.
- Konrath, S. H., O'Brien, E. H., & Hsing, C. (2011). Changes in Dispositional Empathy in American College Students Over Time: A Meta-Analysis. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 15(2), 180–198.
- Larner, W. (2000). Neo-liberalism: Policy, Ideology, Governmentality. *Studies in Political Economy*, 63, 5–25.
- Larner, W. (2006). Review of A Brief History of Neoliberalism. *Economic Geography*, 82, 449-451.
- Locke, J. (1689). *Two Treatises of Government*. London: Awnsham Churchill.
- Maunder, R.G. & Hunter, J. J., (2001). Attachment and psychosomatic medicine: Developmental Contributions to stress and disease. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 63, 556-567 .
- Mercer, J. (2011). Attachment and its vicissitudes: Toward an updated theory. *Theory and Psychology*, 21, 25–45.
- Mikulincer, M., Shaver, P. R., & Pereg, D. (2003). Attachment theory and affect regulation: The dynamics, development, and cognitive consequences of attachment-related strategies. *Motivation and Emotion*, 27, 77–102.

- Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2007). *Attachment in adulthood: Structure, dynamics, and change*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2012). An Attachment Perspective on Psychopathology. *World Psychiatry, 11*(1), 11–15.
- Murphy, P. & Waddington, I. (2010). Are Elite Athletes Exploited? *Sport in Society*, 239-255.
- Nafstad, H. E., Blakar, R. M., Carlquist, E., Phelps, J. M., & Rand-Hendriksen, K. (2007). Ideology and Power: The Influence of Current Neo-liberalism in Society. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology, 32*(4), 313–327.
- Nozick, R. (1974). *Anarchy, State and Utopia*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Pickett, K.E., James, O.W., & Wilkinson, R.G. (2006). Income inequality and the prevalence of mental illness: a preliminary international analysis. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, 60*(7), 646-647.
- Putnam, R. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Read, J. (2009). A Genealogy of Homo-Economicus: Neoliberalism as the Production of Subjectivity. *Foucault Studies, 6*, 25-36.
- Rose, N. (2008). Psychology as a Social Science. *Subjectivity, 25*(1), 446–462.
- Rose, N. (1999) *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Seligman, M. (2000). *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment*. New York: Free Press.
- Shaver, P. R., & Hazan, C. (1993). Adult romantic attachment: Theory and evidence. In D. Perlman & W. Jones (Eds.), *Advances in personal relationships* (Vol. 4, pp. 29–70). London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Shaver, P. R., Collins, N. L., & Clark, C. L. (1996). Attachment styles and internal working models of self and relationship partners. In G. J. O. Fletcher & J. Fitness (Eds.), *Knowledge structures in close relationships: A social psychological approach* (pp. 25–61). Mahwah: Erlbaum.
- Shaver, P. R., & Mikulincer, M. (2002). Attachment-related psychodynamics. *Attachment & Human Development, 4*, 133–161.
- Smith, A. (1776). *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. (E. Cannan, Ed.). London: Methuen & Co. Retrieved from <http://www.econlib.org/library/Smith/smWNCover.html>
- Somers, M.R. (2008). *Genealogies of Citizenship: Markets, Statelessness, and the Right to Have Rights*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Sroufe, L. A., & Waters, E. (1977). Attachment as an Organizational Construct. *Child Development*, 48(4), 1184–1199.
- Sundgot-Borgen, J. & Torstveit, M. K. (2004). Prevalence of Eating Disorders in Elite Athletes Is Higher Than in the General Population. *Clinical Journal of Sport Medicine* 14(1):25-32.
- Thatcher, M. (1987). "Aids, Education and the Year 2000." *Women's Own*, pp. 8–10.
- Thorsen, D. E. (2010). The Neoliberal Challenge. What is Neoliberalism? *Contemporary Readings in Law and Social Justice*, 2(2), 188–214.
- Thorsen, D.E. & Lie, A. (2006) What is Neoliberalism? Oslo, University of Oslo, Department of Political Science, Manuscript.
- Twenge, J. M. (2000). The Age of Anxiety? Birth Cohort Change in Anxiety and Neuroticism, 1952-1993. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79(6), 1007–1021.
- Twenge, J. M., & Foster, J. D. (2010). Birth Cohort Increases in Narcissistic Personality Traits Among American College Students, 1982-2009. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 1(1), 99–106.
- Twenge, J. M., Gentile, B., DeWall, C. N., Ma, D., Lacefield, K., & Schurtz, D. R. (2010). Birth Cohort Increases in Psychopathology Among Young Americans, 1938-2007: A Cross-Temporal Meta-Analysis of the MMPI. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 30(2), 145–154.
- Waters, E. (2000). Notes on attachment as grand theory. Unpublished manuscript.
- Wilkinson, R., & Pickett, K. (2010). *The Spirit Level: Why Equality is Better for Everyone*. London: Allen Lane.
- Wilson, E. (2008). *Against Happiness: In Praise of Melancholy*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.
- Winegard, B., & Winegard, C. J. (2011). The Awful Revolution: Is Neoliberalism a Public Health Risk? *Dissident Voice*. Retrieved January 07, 2014, from <http://dissidentvoice.org/2011/04/the-awful-revolution-is-neoliberalism-a-public-health-risk/>
- Wright Mills, C. (1959). *The Sociological Imagination*. New York: Oxford University Press.